

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12 TRSE-00

MBFR-03 SAJ-01 SCEM-02 EB-11 AF-10 ACDA-19 SS-15

NSC-10 CIEP-02 OEP-01 RSR-01 /151 W
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R 141110 Z APR 73

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9742

SECDEF

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1858

E. O. 11652: GDS 12/31/79

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: DRAFT REPORT TO NATO MINISTERS ON MED SITUATION

SUMMARY: INTERNATIONAL STAFF HAS NOW CIRCULATED ITS DRAFT REPORT ON SITUATION IN MED (DPA(73)107-- AVAILABLE THROUGH NATO REGISTRIES). REPORT WILL BE CONSIDERED BY ALLIED DRAFTING GROUP MAY 7-11, AFTER WHICH IT WILL BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL FOR TRANSMISSION TO NAC MINISTERIAL IN JUNE. REPORT APPEARS GENERALLY ADEQUATE AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION HERE. FOLLOWING IS NOTEWORTHY:

- REPORT NOTES SHIFT OF SOVIET EMPHASIS FROM EASTERN MED TO GULF;
- IT PROPOSES THAT ALLIES UNDERTAKE EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS TO DEAL WITH OIL AND ENERGY CRISIS;

- THERE IS ONLY BRIEF MENTION OF ALLIED POLICY TOWARDS LIBYAN DANGER ZONES OR RESTRICTED AREAS. (WE ASSUME WASHINGTON CONFIDENTIAL

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WILL PROVIDE ITS VIEWS FURTHER TO PARA 69 OF C- M(72)56, WHICH WAS LARGELY US LANGUAGE. WE ALSO ASSUME ITALY WILL ADVOCATE

A MORE ACTIVE POLICY TO DISCOURAGE LIBYA ON THIS MATTER.);

- GENERAL CONCLUSIONS, AND ESPECIALLY ON MILITARY QUESTIONS;
ARE SOFTER THAN WARRANTED.

ACTION REQUESTED: COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE BY MAY 4, RPT MAY 4.
END SUMMARY.

1. THERE FOLLOW KEY PORTIONS OF DRAFT REPORT:

BEGIN TEXT

III. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ALLIANCE

A. POLITICAL

59. THE CONTINUANCE AND, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPANSION OF ITS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA REMAINS FOR THE SOVIET UNION AN ESSENTIAL OBJECTIVE. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THAT THE USSR IS IN THE PROCESS OF MODIFYING THE PATTERN OF ITS PENETRATION TO ADAPT IT TO THE EVOLUTION OF THE SITUATION. NO DOUBT MOSCOW'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH A WIDER RANGE OF SUPPORT FACILITIES OUTSIDE EGYPT WAS PARTLY DICTATED BY CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT THIS REORGANIZATION MAY WELL HAVE BEEN DECIDED ADVISEDLY TO CATER FOR FRESH SOVIET PREOCCUPATIONS. THE USSR'S RELATIVELY LOW- KEY RESPONSE TO THE FAIT ACCOMPLI OF THE CUT- BACK OF ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN EGYPT WAS, IT MUST BE ADMITTED, A LITTLE SURPRISING AND PROMPTS ONE TO WONDER WHETHER, IN THE KREMLIN'S EYES, THE FOCAL POINT OF THE POLITICAL CONFRONTATION HAS PERHAPS SHIFTED FROM THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TO THE PERSIAN GULF. THE FACT THAT THE EGYPTIANS FOUND THEMSELVES OBLIGED TO TURN ONCE MORE TO MOSCOW AND MAKE AMENDS NATURALLY STRENGTHENS THE KREMLIN'S HAND AND ALLOWS IT TO EXERT THE NECESSARY INFLUENCE IN CAIRO WITH LESS OUTLAY AND AT LESS RISK TO ITSELF. IN OTHER WORDS, THE USSR MAY BE DERIVING ADVANTAGE FROM THIS SITUATION, WHICH HAS ENABLED IT TO REDUCE AN EXCESSIVE COMMITMENT IN EGYPT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SECURING A FOOTHOLD IN THE GULF AREA, WHICH IT DEEMS TO BE STRATEGICALLY MORE IMPORTANT. THE PROBLEM OF WESTERN OIL SUPPLIES WHICH, AS EVERY OBSERVER AGREES, WILL OVERSHADOW THE
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NEXT DECADE, LENDS MOREOVER, TO THE GULF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE. THE COUNTRIES OF THE ALLIANCE WOULD THEREFORE BE WELL- ADVISED TO KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS AREA AND THEY SHOULD TAKE SPECIAL CARE TO ENSURE THAT THE IRAQIAN INITIATIVES IN KUWAIT DO NOT UPSET THE PRESENT BALANCE.

60. THE ABSENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE ARAB- ISRAELI CONFLICT, FOSTERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA A LATENT INSTABILITY CONDUCIVE TO SOVIET

PENETRATION. THE ALLIED COUNTRIES SHOULD THEREFORE ENCOURAGE ALL EFFORTS AIMED AT ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE, LASTING AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THIS CONFLICT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242, WHICH STILL REPRESENTS THE MOST PRACTICABLE WAY OF RESOLVING THE QUESTION. THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY TERRORIST ACTIVITIES ARE BEING CONSIDERED BY THE NATO COUNTRIES, WHICH IS TO BE WELCOMED, SINCE, AS WAS AGAIN DEMONSTRATED BY THE KHARTOUM OUTRAGE, THERE ARE NO LIMITS TO WHAT THE EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS WILL DO TO HINDER THE SEARCH FOR A WAY OUT OF THE DIPLOMATIC DEADLOCK.

B. MILITARY

61. THERE HAVE BEEN NO MAJOR CHANGES IN THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA AFFECTING THE NATO ALLIANCE. SOVIET OPERATIONAL POTENTIAL AND ROLE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN APPEARS UNALTERED, ALTHOUGH STILL SUFFERING FROM A TOTAL LACK OF AIR RECONNAISSANCE OR STRIKE CAPABILITY. THIS DEFICIENCY COULD BE MADE GOOD FROM SYRIA, BUT HAS NOT YET MATERIALIZED.

62. THE PROBLEMS DERIVING FROM THE IMPOSITIONS BY LIBYA OF RESTRICTED AREAS OVER AND ON INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SHOULD BE HELD UNDER REVIEW.

C. ECONOMIC

63. SETTING ASIDE THE EVER- PRESENT POSSIBILITY OF MILITARY OR POLITICAL UPHEAVALS IN THE REGION, THE NEW AGREEMENTS MENTIONED EARLIER RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF ENSURING THAT THE COUNTRIES OF THE ALLIANCE HAVE ACCESS TO OIL FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HENCEFORTH, THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF ARAB AND ESTERN COUNTRIES IN SO FAR AS SUPPLIES ARE CONCERNED WILL
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ALSO BE EXPERIENCED AT THE MONETARY AND FINANCIAL LEVELS AS A RESULT OF THE EXPECTED INCREASE IN THE REVENUE OF THE OPEC COUNTRIES (THE MAJORITY OF WHICH ARE ARAB STATES). THE WHOLE REGION HAS CONSIDERABLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND IT IS STILL THE WESTERN NATIONS THAT ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO MEET THEM.

64. IT APPEARS URGENT FOR THE COUNTRIES OF THE ALLIANCE TO HOLD EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS IN ORDER:

(I) TO AVOID COMPETITION BETWEEN THE OIL- CONSUMING COUNTRIES, FROM WHICH ONLY THE OPEC COUNTRIES WOULD BENEFIT;

(II) TO DEVELOP WITHOUT DELAY OTHER SOURCES OF ENERGY WHICH COULD IN TEN YEARS' TIME BEGIN TO REPLACE PETROLEUM;

(III) IF POSSIBLE, TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF ASSISTING THE ARAB OIL-

PRODUCING COUNTRIES TO FIT BETTER INTO THE NON- COMMUNIST WORLD' S
ECONOMIC AND TRADE PATTERN SO AS TO PREVENT THEM FROM SETTING CEIL-
INGS ON THEIR OIL PRODUCTION AND FROM DISRUPTING INTERNATIONAL
MONETARY MARKETS, AND EVEN CERTAIN WESTERN ECONOMIES.

IV. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

65. IF THE USSR' S POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC
PENETRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA HAS ASSUMED A LESS
SPECTACULAR GUISE, IT REMAINS NONE THE LESS AN OBJECTIVE WHICH
MOSCOW IS AS INTENT ON PURSUING AS IN THE PAST. IN THE
POLITICAL SPHERE, THE ALLIES SHOULD PROMOTE EFFORTS AIMED AT
ACHIEVING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB- ISRAELI CONFLICT.
IT SEEMS ADVISABLE FOR A CLOSE WATCH TO BE KEPT ON POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF AREA SO AS TO COUNTER- IN
CONJUNCTION WITH APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC MEASURES- ANY DEVELOP-
MENTS LIKELY TO JEOPARDIZE ALLIED OIL SUPPLIES. IN THE
MILITARY FIELD, THE PARTIAL RESUMPTION OF RUSSO- EGYPTIAN
CO- OPERATION AND THE INCREASED SOVIET PRESENCE IN IRAQ WARRANT
THE CONTINUATION OF ALLIED EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE BALANCE
OF FORCES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 02 APR 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NATO01858
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730458/abqcdykc.tel
Line Count: 187
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <18-Sep-2001 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DRAFT REPORT TO NATO MINISTERS ON MED SITUATION
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
To: STATE
SECDEF INFO ANKARA
ATHENS
LONDON
PARIS
ROME
USDOCOSOUTH

USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005